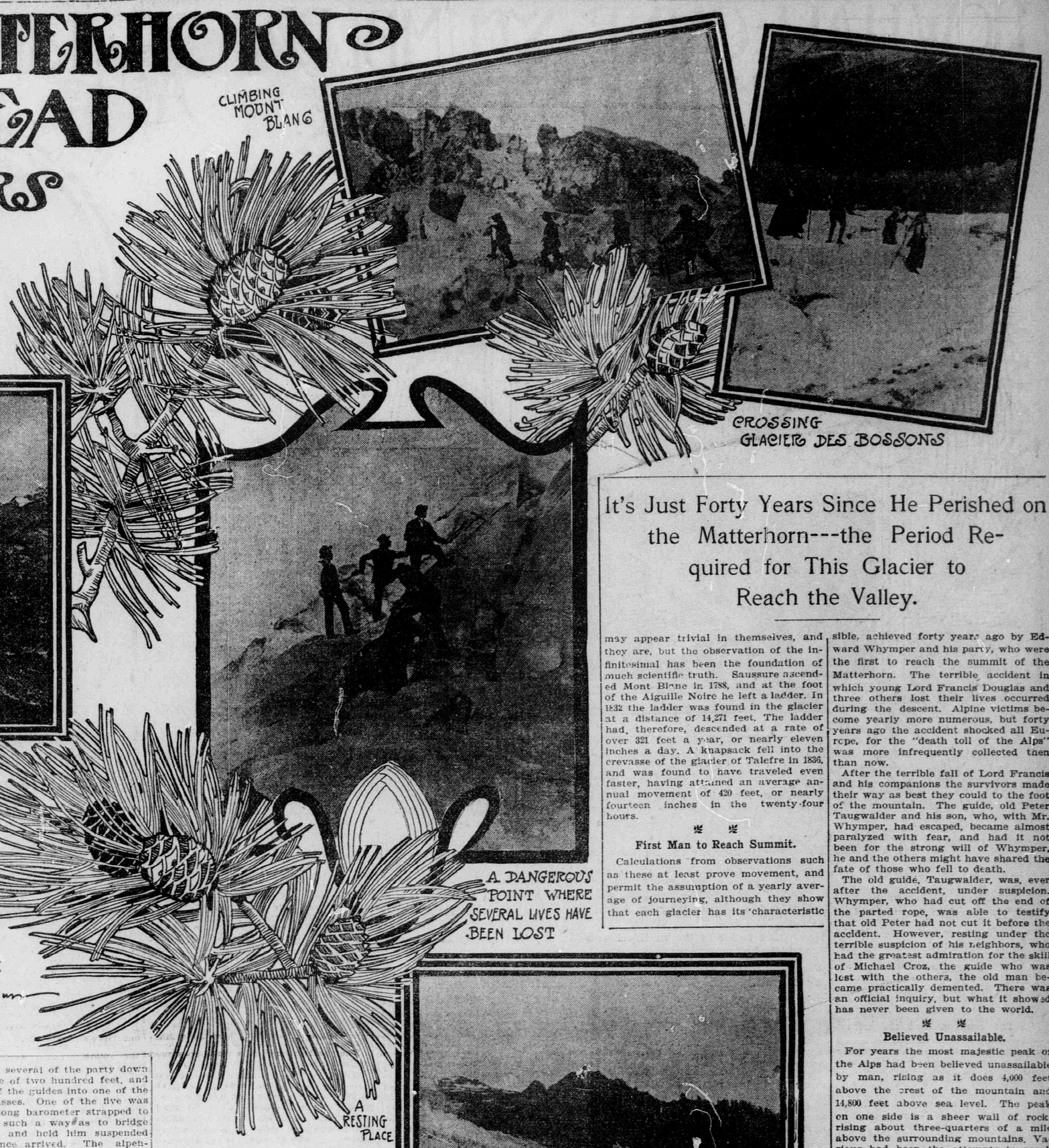
WILL THE MATTERHORN GIVE UP IT'S DEAD AFTER FORTY YEARS ENGULFMENT IN A TOMB OF ICE?

IT WAS HERE THAT LORD FRANCIS DOUGLAS LOST HIS LIFE FORTY YEARS AGO



Alpine Climbers Expect the Zmutt Glacier to Yield This Year the Body of Its Most Famous Victim, Lord Francis Douglas.

London, May 12.

IN THE hope that the slowly moving Zmutt glacier may this year yield up the long entombed body of one of its most famous victims, Lady Florence Dixie has published a letter appealing to all Alpine climbers who may be in the vicinity to keep a sharp lookout for the corpse of her brother, Lord Francis Douglas, who perished there forty years ago in the descent from the summit of the Matterhorn. Notwithstanding the great lapse of time experts declare that if discovered it will be found in an excellent state of preservation—practically embalmed in ice—and will be easily recognizable.

It was during the first attempt to master the Matterhorn that the terrible tragedy occurred which caused the death of three out of the four intrepid adventurers who had successfully accomplished the feat, and one of their guides. The fourth member of the party, Edward Shymper, still survives and is one of the most renowned of mountain climbers. The ascent—the first on record—was made on July 14, 1865. After resting at the summit for an hour and exulting in the knowledge that they had accomplished something that no men in the world had ever succeeded in doing before, the little party started to descend. They had three guides with them and one of these Michael Croz, of Chamounix, after placing the feet of Mr. Hadow in the niches which he had cut, turned to go a step lower. He either missed his footing or was knocked over by Mr. Hadow's falling. There was a shriek of horror and then the two glided down the slope, pulling after them first the Rev. Charles Hudson and then Lord Frances Douglas, both of whom were tied to the same rope.

Mr. Whymper and the other two guides had just time to plant themselves firmly when the shock came. The rope which would also have drawn them to death snapped.

"For two or three seconds," says Mr. Wymper, in his account of the disaster, "we saw our unfortunate companions sliding downward on their backs and spreading out their hands endeavoring to save themselves; then they disappeared one by one and fell from precipice to precipice on to the glacier below, a distance of 4,000 feet."

And in the frigid embrace of the glacier from that day to this the body of Lord Francis has remained. No trace of it was ever discovered beyond portion of one sleeve. The other three bodies were recovered and buried. At a rate of speed which admits of almost exact mathematical calculation the glacier has since been steadily descending, and this year that portion of it on which the Alpinists fell should reach the valley. It is that which led Lady Florence Dixie to ask all who may be visiting Zmutt this summer to be on the watch for it.

"I was a very little child when the accident in question occurred," says Lady Florence in her letter, "but I recall the fact that my brother expressed a wish before leaving for the Alps that if he should be killed and his remains recovered he should be buried on the spot."

Former Recoveries.

The tragic fate of her brother did not check the development of an equally adventurous spirit in Lady Florence. She has been in perils often of her own seeking. As far back as 1878 she explored the unknown wastes of Patagonia, and a few years later found her acting as a war correspondent in the earlier Boer war.

Calculations such as those which point to this year favoring the recovery of the body of the unfortunate young Englishman have proven true on a similar ocasion. In 1820, two Englishmen and a Russian, with seven guides, attempted the ascent of Mont Blanc. An avalanche swept several of the party down a sharp slope of two hundred feet, and tossed five of the guides into one of the glacier crevasses. One of the five was saved by a long barometer strapped to his back in such a way as to bridge the crevasse and hold him suspended until assistance arrived. The alpenstock of another saved its owner in the same way. Three men were lost in the depths of the great glacier.

Dr. Forbes, the English geologist, made several excursions to the Mont Blanc region and minutely studied the movements of glaciers about that time. During one visit he completed his estimates of the velocities of several Swiss glaciers, and expressed the belief that the glacier which had swallowed the three men would deliver its dead at the foot of the mountain within thirty-five or possibly forty years.

After Many Years.

This Molochlike glacier, the Glacier des Bossons, acted precisely as Dr. Forbes predicted, and in 1861, 1863, and 1865 it yielded up the remains of three of the unfortunate men who were lost, respectively forty-one, forty-three, and forty-five years previously.

While all were lost in the same crevasse at the same time, the difference in time is accounted for from the fact that the middle of the glacier moves with greater rapidity than does the sides. In some manner the bodies of two of the guides had been jostled by the great ice river toward its edges, while the remains in the middle were yielded up several years before the others.

Glaciers are very old—centenarians every one of them. It is difficult for the householder, who finds, especially in summer time, his supply of ice dwindle with rapidity, to believe that the snow which falls on the Col-du-Geant, for instance, is 120 years old when it finally arrives at the lower extremity of the Glacier des Bois. It is by the simplest mathematics that this information is learned. Observation and measurements of yearly movements are taken, the length of the route traversed measured, and the rest is easy.

Not Always Cruel.

There was little remaining of the three guides whose relics were given up in the years mentioned, for the grinding of the great mass of ice against the rocky walls of the valley is too tremendous for anything to withstand successfully. However, glaciers are not always so cruel to their victims, and in 1860 a very slowly moving glacier in the Austrian Alps, which flows in the Ahrenthal, threw out a well-preserved corpse, still clad in a dress the ancient fashion of which had been abandoned by the mountaineers for centuries.

Some of the observations which have led to the calculations upon which is based the belief that Lord Francis Douglas' body will be recovered this year may be mentioned briefly. They may appear trivial in themselves, and they are, but the observation of the infinitesimal has been the foundation of much scientific truth. Saussure ascended Mont Blanc in 1788, and at the foot of the Aiguille Noire he left a ladder. In 1832 the ladder was found in the glacier at a distance of 14,271 feet. The ladder had, therefore, descended at a rate of over 321 feet a year, or nearly eleven inches a day. A knapsack fell into the crevasse of the glacier of Talefre in 1836, and was found to have traveled even faster, having attained an average annual movement of 420 feet, or nearly fourteen inches in the twenty-four hours.

First Man to Reach Summit.

Calculations from observations such as these at least prove movement, and permit the assumption of a yearly average of journeying, although they show that each glacier has its characteristic movement, and that the gait varies with each.

The expectations of this year recall the feat, previously regarded as impossible, achieved forty years ago by Edward Whymper and his party, who were the first to reach the summit of the Matterhorn. The terrible accident in which young Lord Francis Douglas and three others lost their lives occurred during the descent. Alpine victims become yearly more numerous, but forty years ago the accident shocked all Europe, for the "death toll of the Alps" was more infrequently collected then than now.

After the terrible fall of Lord Francis and his companions the survivors made their way as best they could to the foot of the mountain. The guide, old Peter Taugwalder and his son, who, with Mr. Whymper, had escaped, became almost paralyzed with fear, and had it not been for the strong will of Whymper, he and the others might have shared the fate of those who fell to death.

The old guide, Taugwalder, was, ever after the accident, under suspicion. Whymper, who had cut off the end of the parted rope, was able to testify that old Peter had not cut it before the accident. However, resting under the terrible suspicion of his neighbors, who had the greatest admiration for the skill of Michael Croz, the guide who was lost with the others, the old man became practically demented. There was an official inquiry, but what it showed has never been given to the world.

Believed Unassailable.

For years the most majestic peak of the Alps had been believed unassailable by man, rising as it does 4,000 feet above the crest of the mountain and 14,800 feet above sea level. The peak on one side is a sheer wall of rock, rising about three-quarters of a mile above the surrounding mountains. Various had been the attempts to reach its summit, among them at attempt by Tyndall. Whymper had made seven previous trials before his great achievement. What would have been an occasion of great rejoicing was turned into one of sadness by the cruel accident during the descent. All in the party excepting Mr. Hadow, who was mountaineering for the first time, had had experience, even Lord Francis Douglas, who was only about nineteen years old, had spent several seasons in the great mountains, and was accredited an expert in mountain climbing.

TOO SUDDEN.

"Will Jenkins has proposed——"

"What, that duffer?"

"Why, I never thought him a duffer. He proposed——"

"Last night, I suppose. He's certainly got his nerve! But he can't have you; I want you myself! Say, dear, will you marry me?"

"Why, Jack, how sudden you are! But, of course, I will!"

"That's right, Jenkins can go to thunder."

"What have you got against Mr. Jenkins, dear?"

"His proposal to you, the big——"

"But, dear, he did not propose marriage! He proposed that we get up a picnic."—Houston Post.

ROME REGRETS THE DEPARTURE OF AMERICAN AMBASSADOR

Rome, May 6.

AS THE American Ambassador at St. Petersburg, George von Legerke Meyer, will occupy a much more difficult position than the one which he has so successfully filled here. Russia is the land of trouble, and at any time the American representative there may be required to engage in negotiations necessitating the highest diplomatic skill to bring them to a successful issue. That Mr. Meyer will prove equal to whatever demands are made upon his talents and tact is the opinion of all who are familiar with his career here. But Roman society regrets his departure.

His transference from the diplomatic calm of the Eternal City to the stormy Russian capital is regarded here as a well-merited recognition of his fitness for the post. He came here with a reputation as a shrewd business man who knows how to make money—which is not regarded as a special recommendation in aristocratic Italian circles, with Old World notions of the vulgarity of trade. Now, many of these same aristocrats are wondering what are the peculiar conditions of American commercial life which enable a man like Mr. Meyer, while accumulating a fortune, to acquire culture, courtesy, dignity, charm of manner—in short, all those evidences of good breeding which are supposed to be the peculiar heritage of people of exalted hereditary rank.

Of course, money, counts for much with an American ambassador, who is expected to spend a deal more money than Uncle Sam pays him in maintaining the dignity of his position. But lacking other qualifications, among a people so peculiarly sensitive as the Italians, the command of wealth would only serve to advertise an American ambassador's unfitness for the role undertaken by him. How well Mr. Meyer has made money serve the higher purposes of his mission may be inferred from the fact that for five years his home has been the center of American life in Rome and the most popular house in diplomatic and fashionable circles. Italians love beauty and charm. Mr. Meyer has the latter in an unusual degree, and Mrs. Meyer the former; her magnificent figure and golden hair making her one of the most noticeable persons in any room which she enters.

The King and Queen, already favorably disposed toward Americans, were not long in discovering after Mr. and Mrs. Meyer had established themselves at the Palazzo Brancaccio that a new element in the amity of nations and the enjoyment of society had appeared, and showed them so many signs of favor as almost to arouse jealousies.

"Those Americans have everything," one old ambassador sighed—by the way, his wife was noted for her unamiability—"not only have they money, a way with them, and wit, but beautiful wives into the bargain." And thus the Meyer family went from success to success, in the meantime "bringing out" their two daughters, who are only a little less popular than their parents.

The embassy quarters in Rome are very modest, consisting of a suite of four rooms, comfortably furnished in walnut and something green, heated comfortably, and having an atmosphere of opulent activity thoroughly American. One of the ministers of the late cabinet remarked one day:

"I have never been in the United States, but I know exactly what it is like; the American embassy is a little bit of that interesting country transported into our ancient Rome."

If the embassy is American, the American representative's home in the Palazzo Brancaccio is Italy, pure and simple. "When in Rome, do as Romans do," has been taken to heart by Mr. Meyer, with the result that his quarters are in a palace of the best type, which morever is owned by an American.

The Princess Brancaccio was a Miss Field, of New York, and finding her husband's heirlooms and priceless antique treasures scattered about in various places, she gathered them all together and brought them to Rome. Mr. Meyer leased the immense first floor of her palace, which communicates with the most beautiful garden in Rome. The staircase is regal in its splendid simplicity, being a sweep of easy steps in white marble, with a couple of turns, carpeted in red and the walls hung with priceless antique tapestries.

Mr. Meyer is known to the general public principally through his invariable presence at the fox hunt, where he follows the hounds, and the frequency with which he appears in his red 24 horsepower motor car, which bears him about the streets swiftly and safely, which is due to his prudence quite as much as to the skill of his chauffeur. This same motor car, together with the language which is his, are among the links which binds him to the friendship of the King. Victor Emanuel loves the English tongue, and he loves sport. He has often invited Mr. Meyer to take a seat in the royal automobile, while his majesty has two or three times accepted a seat in his turn in Mr. Meyer's car, its owner being at the helm. Mr. Meyer displays no nervousness on these occasions, but his chauffeur has confessed that he was glad not to be in his master's shoes.

On one of these trips the ambassador was an involuntary law-breaker, having to give way to force majeure. They started—a most imposing sight, the big red automobile surrounded by the King's four bicyclists, and followed by other cars with the King's aides and a gentleman of the household—well within the speed limit, but the ambassador was soon aware that something was wrong, his royal companion not seeming quite happy. However, etiquette did not permit of his asking questions and he cudgeled his brains for the reason in silence. Presently his majesty said, "What do you say to taking advantage of this magnificent stretch of road?" The ambassador replied that they were only just within the speed limit, and that the bicyclists were already having all they could do to keep up.

"The bicyclists!" echoed the King, as though he had never heard of them before, "Oh, they must look out for themselves."

"But I thought they were here to look out for your majesty," ventured Mr. Meyer.

"This is a better guard," was the reply, as the King put his hand in his pocket and drew out a deadly-looking small revolver; "this I know how to use, and will, too, if the necessity arises."

That was quite enough. Mr. Meyer after that cheerfully broke the laws of Italy in the company of the King of that country, arriving at the royal hunting lodge half an hour quicker than Victor Emanuel had ever done before. On the way back the King said gravely: "Mr. Meyer, you have broken the laws of my kingdom, it is my duty to have you denounced to the police; this will give rise to a diplomatic incident, and you will be recalled." The ambassador almost lost control of the machine, he was so startled, but a twinkle in Victor Emanuel's eye was sufficient, and his only reply was to put on more speed.

In the hunting field, which in Rome is stiff to the last degree, Mr. Meyer divides the honors with M. Barrere, the French ambassador. They always follow the hounds, but the latter is alone, while Mr. Meyer is usually accompanied by his two daughters, who are as much at home on horseback as their father, which is saying a great deal.

The Reigate Puzzle

(Continued from Page Four).

them into his power, proceeded, under threats of exposure, to levy blackmail upon them. Mr. Alec, however, was a dangerous man to play games of that sort with. It was a stroke of positive genius on his part to see in the burglary scare which was convulsing the country side an opportunity of plausibly getting rid of the man whom he feared. William was decoyed up and shot, and had they only got the whole of the note and paid a little more attention to detail in their accessories, it is very possible that suspicion might never have been aroused."

"And the note?" I asked.

Sherlock Holmes placed the subjoined paper before us.

If you will only come round to the east gate you will very much surprise you and be of the greatest service to you and also to Annie Morrison. But say nothing to anyone upon the matter

"It is very much the sort of thing that I expected," said he. "Of course, we do not yet know what the relations may have been between Alec Cunningham, William Kirwan, and Annie Morrison. The result shows that the trap was skillfully baited. I am sure that you cannot fail to be delighted with the traces of heredity shown in the p's and in the tails of the g's. The absence of the i-dots in the old man's writing is also most characteristic. Watson, I think our quiet rest in the country has been a distinct success, and I shall certainly return much invigorated to Baker street tomorrow."